

THE
J U D G M E N T
O F T H E
Church of *England*

In the Point of
O R D I N A T I O N,
Truly argued from her OFFICES,
and P R A C T I C E.

P R O V I N G
That She neither doth, nor ever did, allow
any Right in *Presbyters* to Ordain.

In which, what has been advanc'd to the contrary, by Mr. *Ferdinando Shaw*, a Dissenting Teacher, in his late Pamphlet, call'd, *The Judgment of the Church of England in the Point of Ordination*, &c. is fully Answer'd, and Expos'd.

In a Letter to a Friend.

Quid facit, Exceptâ Ordinatione, Episcopus quod Presbyter non faciat? Hier. Epist. ad Evag.

L O N D O N, Printed for *John Morphew*, near
Stationers-Hall. 1715. Price three Pence.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE
J U D G M E N T

Of the Church of *England*

In the Point of

O R D I N A T I O N, &c.

In a Letter to a Friend.

S I R,

June 20. 1715.

ACCORDING to your Desire, I shall briefly give you my Thoughts concerning the Pamphlet you sent me last Week; which the Author thinks so very considerable a Performance, that he intimates to his Reader, *p. 9.* as if nothing of this Nature ever appear'd before. " That he has
" no where seen the Book of Orders carefully ex-
" amin'd, the Offices particularly enquir'd into,
" nor the Practice of the Church in her Ordinati-
" ons fully declar'd; which he cannot but wonder
" at, since these Things are so obvious, and so e-
" vidently in favour of Presbyterian Ordination."

How true this Observation is, I shall shew by and by. But would it not make one pity *Dr. Comber*, *Dr. Nicholls*, and many other great Men, who have wrote so elaborately upon the Ordination-Offices, yet never could make those Discoveries which this judicious Critick has done, who, I believe, thinks himself qualified to instruct the Bishop of *Litchfield*, and all his Clergy? Else who can assign a Reason why he should publish his Polemical Tracts just against the Visitation? This he has done two Years successively. And perhaps he designs to be their annual Admonisher: Tho' if his future Performances be of a-piece with this, which now lies before me, they will only expose the Author to the Pity or Scorn of all sensible Men.

'Twill be superfluous to take notice of every Paragraph, (though there are none but what are obnoxious to Censure;) but I shall briefly observe to you some of *Mr. Shaw's* great Blunders, Fallacies, and Self-contradictions.

After which, I shall subjoin three or four plain Arguments, to overthrow the whole Design of his Pamphlet; by proving, that in the Judgment of our Church, the sole Power of Ordination is in Bishops, and that she believes no such Power inherent in Presbyters.

To begin then with his bold and false Affirmation, *p. 5.* wherein he says, "That for above an hundred Years after the Reformation, the Forms of committing to Bishops and Priests their Office, made no Distinction at all in the Order, the Powers granted to the one, for ought appears, were granted to the other, &c."

One would indeed be tempted to believe that of *Mr. Shaw*, which he rudely insinuates, *p. 15.* of the Reverend *Mr. Harris*, viz. that he has never read the Book of Ordination, notwithstanding the

Care he would be thought to have taken in comparing the old and new Books together. For whoever reads the Book of Ordination before the last Review of the Liturgy, *i. e.* the Book as it was from the Reformation to two Years after the Restoration, will find many plain Evidences, that Bishops were accounted a Superiour Order to Presbyters.

And first, I would ask Mr. *Shaw*, or any other Person *who chimes with him in his Notions*, (if any such there be,) how 'tis possible there should be two distinct Offices, one for the Ordination of Priests, and another for the Consecration of Bishops, and yet these be one and the same Order? To what Purpose was there a new Imposition of Hands when a Person came to be made a Bishop, if he had all the Spiritual Powers conveyed to him already in his former Ordination? This must make the Church guilty not only of great Inconsistency, but of horrid Prophanation.

Besides, why did the Preface then affirm, " That it is evident to all Men diligently reading the Holy Scriptures, and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles Time, there have been *these Orders of Ministers* in the Church, *Bishops, Priests, and Deacons?* " And afterwards it specifies what Age a Person must be, before he can be admitted to any of these Orders. Are not these as plain Distinctions betwixt the Office of Bishop, and Presbyter, as are made betwixt Presbyters and Deacons?

But if Mr. *Shaw* may be credited, this Preface was added after the Restoration, *viz.* in the Year 1662. " Then it was (he says) that the Church chang'd her Opinion in this Point: For before then, those who had receiv'd Ordination from meer Presbyters, were admitted to the highest Dignities in the Church; but they were then
" restrained

“restrained by the present Preface to the Book of Orders, p. 6.”

This is so egregious a piece of Falshood, and so easily confuted by any one who has seen a King Charles the First's Common-Prayer-Book, that I wonder what Mr *Shaw* can say for himself, in giving his Reader so false an Account of the Matter.

If the present Preface bars Mr *Shaw* and his Brethren from getting into the highest Dignities of the Church, I am sure the former Preface did as much bar their Predecessors.

There is indeed very little Alteration made betwixt the present and the former Preface. There is nothing I am sure in the former, which favours the Presbyterian Party, any more than in the present: As will appear to any one, who will be at pains to compare them.

Well, but since (as Mr *Shaw* says) the Church changed her Mind in the Year 1662. in favour of Diocesan Bishops; one would think that from that time to this day, he should disclaim all pretence to her Favours. But he is not willing to dismiss her so. She still allows the Validity of Presbyterian Orders.

She has indeed chang'd her Mind, and yet is of the old Mind still.

What a wise Church he makes of her? But the Man who reporteth this of her, and his Communication, are sufficiently known.

Do you think, Sir, that Mr *Shaw* was awake when he wrote the 7th Page, or was he asleep when he wrote the 6th?

He is sure not the Man of that wonderful Memory as has been reported.

I will set his Assertions one over against the other, and then reconcile them who can.

Nor do's it appear by any of the alterations made in the Offices of the Church, that she chang'd her Opinion in this Point *till* about fifty Years ago, *Pag. 6.*

And that she continues in the same Mind to *this very day*, I doubt not to make appear from the present Book of Orders, which is confirm'd by Act of Parliament, *Pag. 7.*

For my part I will readily acknowledge that the Church is of the same Mind as she was a hundred Years ago. But her Judgment both then and now, is very different from Mr *Shaw's*, as is further evident from several Passages in the Offices of Ordination.

In the former Book, as well as in the Present, the Arch-deacon presents the Candidates for Priests Orders to the Bishop in these Words; "Right Reverend Father in God, I present unto you these Persons present, to be admitted to the Order of the Priesthood?"

In the Consecration of a Bishop, the Person Elect is presented in these Words: "Most Reverend Father in God, we present unto you this Godly, and Well-learned Man, to be consecrated a Bishop."

Yet Mr *Shaw* says, *Pag. 5.* "that the Commission they (*i.e.* Bishops, and Presbyters) receiv'd, made no difference in the Function, Name, or Authority.

Again, One Question! then ask'd the Person to be ordained Priest, is, "Will you Reverently obey your Ordinary, and other Chief Ministers unto whom the Government and Charge is committed over you, &c."

But

But the Bishop Elect is ask'd this Question,
 "Will you maintain and set forward Quietness,
 "Peace, and Love amongst all Men, and such as
 "be unquiet, disobedient, and criminous, within
 "your *Diocefs*, *Correct* and *Punish*?"

What can be plainer Evidence that the Church
 then, as well as now, held Bishops and Presbyters
 to be two distinct Orders?

The Arch-bishop also (then as well as now)
 speaks to the Bishop Elect in these Words. *Before I*
admit you to the Administration whereunto you are
 call'd, I will examin you, &c.---And in the Prayer
 immediately before the Consecration, the Arch-
 bishop prayeth, That the Bishop-elect may use
 the *Authority* given unto him not to destroy,
 but to save, &c.

Yet Mr *Shaw* can see no new Authority that
 was design'd to be given him.

Lastly, in the Prayer immediately before the
 Questions, it is pray'd, That God who has ap-
 pointed *divers Orders* in his Church, would mer-
 cifully behold this his Servant *NOW* call'd to the
 Work and Ministry of a Bishop. Sure these are
 none of the Passages, "So *obvious and so evidently in*
favour of Presbyterian Ordination;" for 'tis impossi-
 ble any thing should be plainer against it.

And tho' the Words used at the laying on of
 Hands were not quite so full and expressive, as in
 the present Book, yet 'tis plain from these and
 other Passages in the two several Offices, that
 they were each of them a solemn Admission of
 Persons to a distinct Order in the Church. The
 present Book after the Words, *Receive the Holy*
Ghost, adds, *for the Office and Work of a Priest*,
 in the ordering of Priests, and *for the Office*
and Work of a Bishop in the Consecration of
 Bishops.

Now tho' these Words were very properly added at the last Review of the Liturgy, yet there was no Necessity for any such Addition. For when a Person was to be admitted to either of those sacred Orders, after his Qualifications had been examin'd into, and after Solemn Prayers, wherein the Office he was to be admitted to was particularly, and more than once mention'd, there was no need to mention it over again at the imposing of Hands.

I shall end what I have to say as to the Sense of our Church before the Restoration, with desiring Mr *Shaw* to remember, that no Person could then, any more than now, be consecrated a Bishop, except he had been six Years before (at least) Ordained Priest; which is another Demonstration that the Church esteem'd Bishops an eminently Superior Order to Presbyters: Else one *setting apart* might have serv'd for both, if the Commission they receiv'd, was the same in both: Much less need there have been such an intermediate Space, betwixt Ordination and Consecration.

I now proceed to Mr *Shaw's* great Argument, upon which indeed the whole of his Pamphlet is founded, *viz.* Our Church's permitting Presbyters to lay on Hands together with the Bishop, in the Ordination of a Priest; from whence he argues, that our Church allows an inherent Right in Presbyters to Ordain.

This I shall shew is a very wrong Conclusion. For, 1st. If we should grant (for Arguments sake) that a Bishop cannot Ordain without Presbyters, it will by no means follow that his Presbyters have an inherent Right of Ordaining without him.

There are many Instances in the Civil Government, where a Superior Officer cannot do some Things without the Assistance, and Concurrence

of the Subordinate. But it would be strange Logic to infer from thence, that the Inferiour Officers can act in such Cases without such Superiour Officer.

A Mayor of a Corporation cannot do many things without a Majority of the Council of the Body Corporate. But does it thence follow, that they may assemble, and Act independently of him? If they shou'd, all such Acts would be rescinded as null and invalid.

Or, to join Issue with Mr *Shaw* in an Instance of his own, *Pag.* 10. which he makes to be an Illustration of the Case before us. The Royal Assent, and the Concurrence of the Parliament (he says) are both necessary to the making of a Law. 'Tis granted: But then as the King cannot (according to our present Constitution) Enact any thing into a Law, without the Consent of the Three Estates of the Realm: So neither is there in the Two Houses any inherent Right to make Laws without the King. And therefore this Instance will by no means serve Mr *Shaw's* Turn. I readily grant that Mr *Shaw* and his Brethren are as much Ministers of *Jesus Christ*, as a Bill that has pass'd both Houses of Parliament (but has not had the Royal Assent) is a Law of the Land.

As therefore it do's not follow, that because there must be the Concurrence of both Houses and the Royal Assent to Enact a Law, that therefore the Lords and Commons have an inherent Right to make Laws independently of the King: So neither is it a just Consequence, that because Presbyters always lay on Hands together with the Bishop in Ordaining other Presbyters, that therefore they have a Right of Ordaining without him.

Mr *Shaw* very much insists upon the Words, *Our Hands*, which he says can never be meant in any proper

proper way of speaking, of the Bishop's Hands alone. *Pag. 9.*

As if he did not know that the Plural Number is very frequently put for the Singular: And that it may be so here, (without any impropriety of Language) as well as in the Speeches, Letters, and Proclamations of Kings, I can see no reason to doubt. But 'tis the best way to let every one explain his own Words.

If Mr *Shaw* would seriously peruse the whole Book of Common Prayer, he would learn many Things he is still ignorant of; and amongst others, that the Church often speaks in the Plural Number, when a single Person is only intended. I shall point out to him only two Places. The Exhortation which every Minister is to read when his People are negligent of coming to the Holy Communion, ends with these Words. "For the obtaining whereof, *We* shall not cease to make *Our* humble Petitions unto Almighty God, our Heavenly Father." The other place is in the Office of Confirmation, where the Bishop prays in these Words. "We make our humble Supplications unto thee, for these thy Servants, upon whom, (after the Example of thy Holy Apostles) *We* have now laid our hands." I believe Mr. *Shaw* will grant that there are no Hands laid on in Confirmation but the Bishops. And that it is only a single Clergyman who is spoke of, in the other Instance. And if these Expressions may escape the Charge of impropriety of Language, so may the Words *Imposition of our Hands*, tho' the Presbyters be not at all intended in them.

Having detected some of Mr *Shaw's* fallacious Reasonings and gross Mistakes, I shall only add four plain Arguments to what I have already offered, to prove that in the Judgment of our Church,

it is Bishops only, and not Presbyters, who have the sole Right of Ordination.

1st. She admits no Persons (tho' they have formerly receiv'd Presbyterian Orders) to officiate as Presbyters, or so much as Deacons, till they have receiv'd Episcopal Ordination. This Argument Mr *Shaw* owns has been already laid before him: But I think he ought to consider it again. For since Mr *Baxter*, and all the Advocates of the Presbyterian Party, have all along declar'd against Reordination, as a solemn Mocking of God, and a Contradiction to it self; (as to be sure it is, to admit a Person by Prayers, and Imposition of Hands, to an Office he has been already admitted to, and exercis'd many Years.) Whoever therefore thinks that the Church of *England* allows an inherent Right in Presbyters to Ordain, do's make her guilty both of a great Impiety, and Self-contradiction, every time any of her Bishops lays his Hands upon any such Persons.

Mr *Shaw* knows, that if ever he come over to the Church (as it was said he had a Mind to do, some Years since,) he must begin all a-new. He must be admitted Deacon; must take the Bishops Authority even to read the Scriptures in the Church; must continue a Year (without a particular Favour) in that Office, before he can be a Candidate for the Priest-hood. There will not be the least notice taken of his present pretended Orders. Nay, I believe no Bishop would ordain him without such a publick Renunciation of his present Errours and Orders, as Mr *Richardson* and others (who have left the Dissenters,) have laudably made.

When there arises a Doubt, whether an Infant be truly baptiz'd, Baptism is order'd to be administered conditionally: "If thou art not already
" Baptiz'd,

"Baptiz'd, I Baptize thee &c." And so it would have been here, if the Church had the least Doubt of Mr *Shaw*, and his Brethren's being meer Lay-men.

The same Rules are observ'd in the Admission of Foreign Protestant Ministers to officiate amongst us. Let the *Necessity* they have labour'd under Beyond-Sea be true or false: The Church makes no Account of any Orders but Episcopal, and therefore she admits Romish-Priests without a new Ordination, when they embrace our Communion.

If this be not sufficient Proof that our Church denies any Power in Presbyters to ordain, 'tis impossible to know her Sense, from what she either says or does.

Which is still more evident, if we consider 2^{dly}, That the Church never allows (in any case whatsoever) the Work of Ordination to be delegated to Presbyters. In the Vacancy of a See, tho' Institutions, Mandates for Induction, and Licences may be granted by the Guardians of the Spiritualities, yet Ordination never can. A person that wants Orders, must either go to the Bishop of another Diocese, or stay till the See is full.

3^{dly}. In all Letters of Orders, our Bishops take no Notice of the Presbyters who assisted them in *Imposition* of Hands, but ascribe the whole Act solely to their own Authority. The whole Instrument runs in the Bishop's Name, 'tis subscrib'd by *Him alone*, and 'tis only his Seal that is annexed to it. Whereas if the laying on of the Presbyters Hands was essential to the Ordination, they ought in Reason to be mention'd as well as the Bishop.

And

And 'tis observable in all Letters of Orders, that tho' the Bishop speaks only of himself, yet he always speaks in the Plural Number.

The present Bishop of *Litchfield and Coventry's* Letters begin with these Words: *Tenore Præsentium. NOS JOHANNES* permissione divina *Lichen. & Coven. Episcopus, notum, facimus* ^{universis}, quod *NOS Episcopus antedictus, &c.* Then afterwards, speaking of the Person ordain'd, He adds, *Ad Sacrum Presbyteratus Ordinem, juxta morem, & Ritus Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ admisimus, &c.*

And lest Mr *Shaw* should (against all Reason) say, that the Presbyters are understood, tho' not express'd, I must assure him, That the Plural Number and the same Words [*mutatis mutandis*] are us'd in a Deacon's Letters of Orders, as are in a Priests, and therefore there can be no room for such a Supposition.

4thly. Our Church never allow'd a Right in Presbyters to Ordain, because she always professes to follow the Primitive Church in her greatest Purity: Therefore she cannot be suppos'd to allow a Practice which was unknown for 1500 Years after Christ.

Mr *Shaw* has rightly observ'd, that the Merits of the Cause betwixt us and the Dissenters does not depend upon this his Performance. As therefore he has not entred into the main Argument, so neither shall I. I shall only add, that if he and his Brethren will be determin'd by the Scriptures and Fathers, the Controversy will soon be at an end. If *by these they will stand or fall*, as he professes, P. 20. then I am sure that their Fall is very near, and certain; and that they can never rise again to disturb the Apostolical Government of our establish'd Church.

I shall

I shall take my leave of Mr *Shaw* and his Book, by recommending to his Consideration, the first of the Apostolical Canons, (which has been already laid before him and his Brethren in the Reverend Mr *Sturges's* unanswerable Sermons) and one Passage out of St. *Ignatius's* Epistles.

Ἐπισκοπος ὑπὸ ἐπισκόπων χειροτονείτω ὑπὸ ἢ τριῶν. Πρεσβύτερος ὑπὸ ἐνὸς ἐπισκόπου. Can. 1. Apost.

Ὁ λαός τε ἐπισκόπου ἢ πρεσβύτων, τῷ διαβόλῳ λατρεύει. — Ignat. Epist. ad Smyrn.

These I shall leave Mr *Shaw* (to whom I have no ill Will, and whose Person I do not so much as know,) to translate, and apply.

I am, Sir,

Your Humble Servant.

P O S T S C R I P T.

ONE other Passage of Mr *Shaw's* I cannot pass over; 'tis in *Pag.* 19. There he tells us, "That all Churches take a Liberty of making Rules and Orders as to Discipline, Modes of Worship, and other Circumstantials, for the good Government of their own Constitution."

I am very glad to hear this News from this Quarter; for 'tis an express allowing the Church that Power of determining in indifferent Things, which she has along justly claim'd, and the Dissenters have always grudg'd her: Infomuch that to this very Hour, the Dissenting Teachers refuse to subscribe to that Clause in the 20th of the

39 Articles "That the Church hath Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies."

If Mr Shaw speaks the Sense of his Party, I hope we shall hear no more of the Church's *unreasonable Impositions*, her sinful adding to Christs Institutions, and the like, of which *Baxter's* and *Calamy's* Books are so full, and which are call'd by the last of these, *those stable Principles upon which Nonconformity is bottom'd*. Mr Shaw grants that all Churches take the same Liberty as we do, as to the determining of Circumstantial, and Modes of Worship. Therefore by his own Confession, whoever separates from our Church upon Account of these Matters, would be Dissenters from any other Church upon the Face of the Earth. And if Mr Shaw believes our Church has such a Power, and that our Ordinations are Presbyterian, what can he say for his own Practice in heading a Separation from Her?

F I N I S.
